

Lady Davidson

6th June 1979

Thank you very much indeed for your two letters for which I was most grateful.

First you must of course come round to Downing Street once we have got ourselves sorted out. Denis and I moved in only last weekend and therefore it will take a little time to get matters arranged as I would like them. But once we have completed the move I would love to see you here. There must be so many memories.

As far as the Conservative Research Department is concerned, I am the first to realise what an outstanding contribution it has made to the fortunes of our Party for so long. The reason for amalgamating Conservative Research Department and Conservative Central Office had nothing to do with the lease of Old Queen Street. The fact of the matter is that it was expensive for us to run the Department in addition to Central Office, particularly at a time when it is vital for the Organisation and Communications Departments at Central Office to be in close touch with the Research Department. The work done by Research Department has to be transmitted through the media or to our own supporters and I am sure that the most efficient way of doing this is to have all our key people in one building. It is sad that we are giving up Old Queen Street, but it was becoming difficult to maximise our true potential when the Party's thinkers were not in direct touch with those responsible for disseminating their ideas.

With best wishes,

The Dowager Viscountess Davidson DBE

Davidson

From
THE CHAIRMAN OF THE PARTY
The Rt. Hon. The Lord Thorneycroft

PC
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CONSERVATIVE & UNIONIST CENTRAL OFFICE,
32 SMITH SQUARE,
WESTMINSTER, SW1P 3HH,
Telephone: 01-222 9000

PT/SO

6th June 1979

Thank you for your copy letter.

The Conservative Research Department will not be closed and it wont be merged. It costs an extra £75,000 a year to keep it where it is and a prospective further heavy capital loss in delapidations at the end of a twelve year lease. It will be preserved separately and I hope improved under its own Director, Mr Alan Howarth. It will be located at least partly inside the Central Office, and possibly partly in the close vicinity to it.

I would be delighted to talk to you sometime about it in the House of Lords.

I am copying this to the Prime Minister's Office, to which your letter was addressed.

THORNEYCROFT

The Dowager Viscountess
Davidson, D.B.E.,
(Baroness Northchurch).

From Viscountess Davidson on

16, LORD NORTH STREET,
WESTMINSTER,
LONDON,

S. W. 1. P 3LD
01-222 2167.

(Northchurch)

1st June. 1979

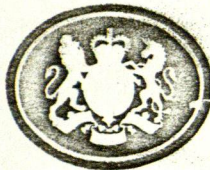
My dear Margaret

That was kind. You need not have written to me but this gives me the opportunity of thanking you. It is wonderful to watch you coping so well with everything & we have all great faith in you. One day I want you to let me come and see you at No 10. — Just to explain this request. John's I married in 1919 & he was, I think,

after having been a secretary to
different Ministers since he left Cambridge
~~the house~~ at no 11 Downing Street
with Bonar-Law. He became an
M.P. in 1920 and when S B was
in no 10 I used to help Mrs Baldwin
with her weekly parties - so much
of our time was spent there.

I would therefore love to come &
see you there - It is a very dear
house & has meant so much
to us both - No hurry about
anything & this note brings you
my love & good wishes all the
time.

Yours
Mimi Davidson



House of Lords · Westminster

Personal

As from:

16 Lord North Street,
London S.W.1.

My dear Margaret

I am writing to you to let you know disturbed I was to read recent press reports about the proposed closure, or merging, of the Conservative Research Department with Central Office.

As you will know, my husband was Chairman of the Party for many years and was instrumental in setting up the Research Department and purchasing the premises at 24 and 34 Old Queen Street. I too have been closely involved with the Research Department since it came into being, and with the Central Office for many years. It is because of this that I am writing to you, and I feel that any change would be a great mistake. Both organisations do excellent work and I cannot understand the need for such a change as I believe the lease still has several years to run.

As I have not received any official notification - the only information I had coming from the newspapers - I do hope that no irreversible decision has yet been taken. I can only say that I have always regarded the work of the Research Department as invaluable to the Party as a whole - and the Parliamentary Party in particular - and the independence of the two organisations has always been considered of mutual benefit.

I hope you will not mind my writing to you on this matter.

Yours

*Joan Davidson
(mimi)*

The Rt Hon Mrs M Thatcher MP
10 Downing Street
London SW1

cc The Rt Hon Lord Thorneycroft